



**THE POLICE COMMISSIONER  
CITY OF NEW YORK**

June 14, 2022

Honorable Jumaane D. Williams  
Public Advocate for the City of New York  
One Centre Street, 15<sup>th</sup> Floor North  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Public Advocate Williams:

I am writing in response to your May 18<sup>th</sup> letter concerning the rights of observers to record police officers pursuant to the Right to Record Act enacted in 2020. The New York City Police Department agrees that this Act has the potential to improve the interactions between our officers and the community.

In answer to your questions:

- Recognizing that recording inside of police stationhouses may expose identities of crime victims, witnesses providing information vital to criminal investigations, juvenile arrestees, and sensitive documents and information, members of the public are not allowed to photograph and/or record police activity *within* Department facilities. Members of the service may order any member of the public who is photographing or recording *within* Department facilities to stop such activity. If such person refuses to stop, they can be ordered to leave the premises. If such person refuses to leave the premises, members of the service may take proper enforcement action under the trespass statutes (i.e. Penal Law sections 140.05 and 140.10).
- The NYPD Administrative Guide includes a section that recording inside police department facilities is prohibited. All police department facilities have signs prominently displayed stating that any photography or video recording is strictly prohibited.
- Instructing officers in the Right to Record Act is a standard part of our Police Academy curriculum for newly hired officers. We also conduct regular in-service training and issue Legal Bureau Bulletins to provide guidance on amendments and new laws that are of interest to our police officers. Accordingly, in July 2020, we published a bulletin concerning the rights of observers to record police officers and the restrictions that constitute interference with police activity.

I hope the information I have provided is useful. Thank you for your continued collaboration and the opportunity to address the concerns of our city's communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Sewell', is written over the printed name and title.

Keechant L. Sewell  
Police Commissioner